

1493. p. 45. 6.

T H E
NATURE and PLACE
O F
H E L L
DISCOVERED:

O R, A

Fair CONJECTURE that the SUN is the only
Tαρταρος, or Receptacle of the DAMNED;
and that there is both *Everlasting Material*
Fire there to torture the Body, and *Inward*
Sorrow to torment the Soul.

In ANSWER to

A late, but atheistical Pamphlet, entituled, *Heaven*
open to all Men; or, a *Treatise solidly proving from*
Scripture and Reason, that (without unsettling the
Practice of Religion) all Men who now are, or here-
after will be upon Earth shall be saved, or made finally
happy.

By the Rev. GEORGE CRAIGHEAD,

Late Minister of the Gospel in *Virginia* (now in *London*)
and Author of the *Blow at modern Crutches*.

REV. xvi. 8, 9. *And the fourth Angel poured out his Vial upon*
the SUN, and Power was given him to scorch Men with Fire,
and they were scorched with great Heat, blasphemed the Name
of God, and repented not to give him Glory.

MARK ix. 47, 48. *To be cast into Hell*, where the Worm dieth
not, and the Fire is not quenched.

“Semper vivunt Incendia Inferna, et inter sartagines flammeat
“*miserabilia corpora Damnatorum cremabuntur.*” SEN.

E D I N B U R G H;

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The following is a list of the
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which have been deposited
in the collection of the
British Museum.

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ISAIAH xxx. 33.

*For Tophet is ordained of old; yea, for the King
it is prepared: he hath made it deep and large.
The Pile thereof is Fire, and much Wood: the
Breath of the Lord, like a Stream of Brim-
stone, doth kindle it.*

MEN, BRETHREN and FATHERS,

OF all the Arguments used to divert Men from their sinful Courses, that of an Eternal Hell, if rightly urged, and duly considered, cannot but have the most powerful Influence, as being the greatest and most lasting Evil our Natures are capable of.

Indeed Things remote and distant, however great and important of themselves, are scarce perceptible to the Eye of the Mind, because a Variety of Objects intervene, and spoil the Prospect. But these that are near, and at hand, tho' but mean and inconsiderable, take up the Thoughts, and employ all our Faculties. Wherever we turn our Eyes, the Cares and Pleasures of Life strike in on all Hands; and while we look at the Things of another World, through the obscure Medium of this, they as it were lose their Magnitude and dwindle into nothing. Hence every pitiful Pleasure, affecting the Senses, is preferred to Heaven itself; and every light Affliction, that endures but a Moment, far more dreadful than everlasting Torments.

It



In order therefore to draw the Veil, and in some measure paint disguised Truth in its native Colours at this Distance, I shall at present lay before you as lively a Representation of the *Place of Perdition* in the Text, as the Compass of a Sermon will allow.

For Tophet is ordained of old, &c. This was a large Place near *Jerusalem*, where the idolatrous *Israelites* burnt their Children in the Fire, in Sacrifice to an Idol called *Moloch* *; and was prepared either for King *Hezekiab*, who purged it of its Idolatry, or for *Senacherib* King of *Assyria*, whose Army, it is supposed, was cut off there by the destroying Angel.

Figuratively it signifies *Hell*; and in that Sense is ordained of old, because originally intended for the Devil and his Angels. It is said to be prepared for the King, to intimate, that tho' great and wicked Men may look big in this World, yet there is no Respect of Persons in the next, and no Degree of earthly Dignity can screen them from that *Wrath which shall be revealed from Heaven on the Children of Disobedience*. It is called deep and large, to shew that it is a Place of vast Extent, and sufficient to contain all the Ungodly that ever lived, or shall live in the remotest Ages of Time. The Pile thereof is compared to Fire and Wood, to describe the Intensity of its Heat, and Fierceness of its Flames. The Lord's Breath is said to kindle it, to denote that though, in our way of thinking, no material Fire can be eternal, yet this is of a most subtle Quality, and will still be kept alive by virtue of that same Almighty Power which first created it.

As to the Nature of this *Tophet*, I shall not be over-nice about that; but content myself with what is revealed in holy Writ. And with regard to the Place, I shall neither attempt an exact Delineation of every Region,

Region, nor (with the *Romish* Church, of which the over merciful Author of the late spurious Pamphlet seems to be a Bastard) quarter this Troop of Sinners in one, and that in another Part of it. Such airy Stuff better becomes dreaming Visionaries like him, than one that is awake, and designs nothing but Truth.

All I propose is, first to shew that there is such a Place; and then examine the several Parts of the Creation, in order to give some solid Account of its Situation: And if the Doctrine advanced do not satisfy, there is no Harm done. You may take your Liberty; and I hope you will not condemn me for using mine. But lest we should lose our Way, and for the Help of your Memories, give me Leave, in the Name of God, without further prefacing, to throw my Meditations on this Subject under the Three following Divisions:

- I. I shall make it appear to you, that future Happiness and Misery await the Godly and Wicked, and that the Punishment reserved for the latter is both certain, just and eternal.
- II. Inquire into the Place and Nature of this Punishment; and particularly, whether it will arise from material Fire in a local Hell, or otherways. And,
- Lastly*, Conclude with a serious Address to Sinners of all Ranks; and shew them how to escape this Place of Torment.

I return to the First general Head, and that is, to make it appear to you, That future Happiness and Misery await the Godly and the Wicked; and that the Punishment reserved for the latter is both certain, just and eternal.

First then, Altho' divine Revelation doth so far evidence the Certainty of this great Truth, as to carry it beyond the Reach of all Cavil or Dispute; yet if we look into the dim Light of natural Reason, we shall find God has not left himself without a Witness even in this Particular.

How shall we find that Beauty and Wisdom that shine throughout all his Works, without looking on this World as a Nursery for the next, and believing that our Condition there will take its Colour according to the Deeds done in the Body? If Life is confined to the short Term of Sixty or Seventy Years, pray

*—Whence this pleasing Hope, this fond Desire,
This longing after Immortality?* CATO.

If there is no *Hereafter*, whence the secret Joy that accompanies the Practice of Virtue, and that great Uneasiness that follows the Commission of Vice? Brutes, it is true, can finish their Business in a short Life, (the Silkworm having spun her Task, lays her Eggs and dies) in a few Years they have all the Endowments they are capable of, and were they to live ten thousand more would be the same as at present: Now, was the human Soul thus at a stand in her Accomplishments, were her Faculties to be full blown, and incapable of further Enlargements; I should imagine she might at Death fall away into nothing, and drop at once into a State of Annihilation. But how can it enter the Mind of Man, that a thinking Being, which is in a perpetual Progress to Perfection, and capable of receiving new Improvements to Eternity, after just having taken a scanty View of the wonderful Works of Creation and Providence, and admired the infinite Wisdom and Goodness

(7)
Goodness of its Creator there, must perish at first setting out, and in the very Beginning of its Inquiries?

In this World we have not Time to establish our Souls in Virtue, and come up to the Perfection of our Natures, before we are hurried off the Stage: While we are yet speaking our Foot slides, and in a Moment we tumble into the Grave. But can an infinitely wise God delight in the Production of such short-lived reasonable Mortals? Would he give us Capacities that cannot be exerted, Passions which can never be gratified? By no Means.

If our Happiness terminates with the transitory Enjoyments of this Life, of all created Beings Man is the most miserable. To have strong Desires implanted in him, and no Object suitable to them; to know of Happiness, and be possessed with earnest Hopes of future Glory, and then quite cut off and disappointed at last, to a thinking Mind would be a Torment superior to any the other Creatures are capable of. And the Fears of an *Hell* should serve only to plague us here, if not designed to prevent our incurring the Punishment of it hereafter.

Moreover, it is impossible to reconcile the present promiscuous Administration of Affairs in this Life, but upon Supposition of the equal Distributions of the next; where good Men shall be adequately rewarded, and bad as adequately punished.

If the Judge of all the Earth be righteous, shall there be but one Event to the godly and ungodly still? Nay, shall the former be reduced to narrow Circumstances, *cut down and withered, whilst the latter flourish as a green Bay Tree, &c.* † How shall we believe, that an infinitely wise God governs the World, if there is never greater Difference between *Saints* and *Sinners* than now? If he lets Virtue and virtuous Men pass unrewarded, and suffers the most egregious

ous Impieties to slip unpunished, the most daring Transgressors to go to their Graves in Peace, having no future Reckoning to fear? At this Rate, one should imagine, that he had either left the World to the Guidance of Chance, or that *Justice* was no Perfection of his Nature.

But on the contrary, the Expectation of *Happiness* or *Misery*, in a Life to come, is a Point universally agreed upon by most Men of all Ages, *Heathens*, *Turks*, *Jews*, and *Christians*; and tho' there has been Instances of some who have professed to believe the Contrary, yet, upon close Examination, it was always found that Interest swayed them; and that being wretchedly wicked themselves, they have rather wished their Principles to be true, than believed they were so. The Existence of a future State, like that of the Diety on which it is grounded, is either originally implanted in the Soul, or handed down by Tradition from the first Man. It is a Truth founded on eternal Justice and Equity, obvious from the faint Glimmerings of natural Reason, and engraven (so to speak) with a Sun-beam on the Book of the Creatures.

Accordingly we find the antient *Heathen Poets* represented the Punishments of the next Life in the most frightful Shapes, representing horrid *Hydras*, and revengeful *Furies*, with snaky Heads, and fiery Whips agitating and torturing guilty Souls. *Virgil*, at the End of his Description, says, That if he had a hundred Mouths and Tongues, they would not suffice to shew the various Plagues wherewith the Inhabitants of *Pluto's Kingdom* are vexed and tortured †: They tell us of an *Ixion* fastened to a Wheel, that with a swift Motion turned round with him without ceasing: They sing of a *Tantalus*, who, for the loathsome Banquet he made the Gods, was in *Hell*, set in Water up to the Chin, with golden Apples hanging to

† *Aeneid*, vii. 6.

his Lips, yet had not Power to stoop to the one to quench his Thirst, nor to reach the other to satisfy his Hunger: They speak of the *Belides*, or fifty Daughters of *Danaus*, who, for the barbarous Massacre of their Husbands in one Night, were condemned to *Hell* to fill a Cask, full of Holes, with Water, which, as fast as filled in, run out again. And to the same Purpose the Story of *Sisyphus*, who for his Robberies was sent to *Hell*, and there set to roll a great Stone up a steep Hill, which, when just at the Top, presently tumbled down again, and so renewed his Labour. And the Punishment of *Titius* is no less remarkable; who, for attempting to ravish *Latona*, was struck dead with a Thunderbolt, and so sent to *Hell*, where he was sentenced to have a Vulture feed upon his Liver, which grew again as fast as devoured; most of which *Ovid* briefly sets forth in seven Verses.

*Viscera præbebat Titius lanianda, novemque
Fugeribus distractus erat tibi Tantale, nulle
Deprenduntur aquæ, queque imminet effugit arbor,
Aut petis, aut urges, ruiturum Sisyphæ saxum;
Volvitur Ixion, et se sequiturque, fugitque,
Molirique suis letibum patrue libus ausæ
Assidue repetunt, quas perdunt Belides undas.*

Now, tho' the Particulars of these and like Descriptions of *Hell* are mere Fictions in themselves, yet do they strongly intimate, that there is such a Place; the Punishments of which will be extremely sharp and violent, and that a Sense of this is too deeply imprinted in the Mind of Man to be blotted out: So that if the *Gentiles*, by Nature, either know, or do the Things contained in the Law, these having not a Law, are a Law unto themselves †.

B

2do, As

† Heb. xiii. 14.

2do, As the *future Misery* of the Wicked is sure and unavoidable, it is likewise highly becoming the divine *Justice*, especially if we consider, that it is their own Choice. Impenitent Sinners are not hurried into *Hell*, without being first warned of their Danger. They foresee that endless Torment is the necessary Result of a sinful Life, and yet, with open Eyes, thrust themselves into it †. *Death and Life, &c.* are set before them, and if they chuse the latter, their Destruction is owing to themselves. Should a Man wilfully swallow down a delicious Poison, and then quarrel with *divine Mercy*, for not preventing his Pains by a Miracle, would you not reckon him vastly inconsistent with himself? Or, will a guilty Criminal's calling his Judge's Sentence unjust, render him liable to that Charge? No more can we censure the *Justice* of God, in leaving obstinate Sinners to eat the Fruit of their Doings: Shall not the Judge of all the Earth do righteously?

Heaven itself would be no Heaven to impure Sinners. Being of the Earth earthy, they have no Taste for spiritual Things. The devilish Disposition of their Hearts would hinder all the Enjoyments of Glory to make them happy: Could a sick Stomach relish the richest Dainties; or a Sow that is used to the Mire be pleased with the finest Garden of Flowers? No more could unregenerate Men relish the Pleasures of those *blissful Regions*? Were they there already, they would be entirely out of their Element, *ut piscis in arido montium jugo*, as a Fish on the Top of a Mountain. What Satisfaction could they find in the Presence of that God, to whose Nature theirs is directly opposite? What Pleasure in the Company of Angels, and just Men made perfect, to whose heavenly Delights and Exercises they were
utterly

utterly averse, while on this Earth? Can there be any Injustice then in banishing them that Society they never loved, and are by no means qualified for? Is it unreasonable that they, who say to God, *Depart from us here*, should hear that fatal Doom, *Depart from me, ye cursed*, &c. denounced against them hereafter?

Again, the *divine Justice*, in this respect, is still more fully cleared, from the following Consideration: God hath not predestinated Men to Torment, by Virtue of any sovereign necessitating Decree, but left it in the Sinner's own Power to be happy or miserable, and also proposed to him the Terms on which the one is to be obtained, and the other avoided; nor can we justly complain of natural Corruption, being richly furnished with a Remedy by Grace. *Punishment is God's strange Work*, and was not primarily threatened with a Design to be inflicted, but to deter us from the Commission of these Things against which it is threatened. And the severer the Threatenings, the greater the Manifestations of the divine Goodness, in laying Men under the strongest Obligations to be holy and happy: So that the merciful JEHOVAH seems to have threatened an *Hell*, to fright us into *Heaven*, as a prudent Lawgiver annexes a Penalty to the Breach of the Laws, thereby to secure a due Deference to his own Authority, and promote the publick Good.

3dly, As the future Punishment of the Ungodly is both certain, just, and, reasonable, it is also *everlasting* †; and being incapable of Diminution, or Alteration, by Time, Place, or Circumstance, endures to *eternal Ages*. Indeed the Words *everlasting* and *eternal*, in Scripture, especially Old Testament Style, are often to be understood in a limited Sense, as

when

when Circumcision is called an *everlasting Covenant* †, and *Sodom* and *Gomorrab* are said to *suffer the Vengeance of eternal Fire*. But then these, and like Expressions, denote only a considerable, but no perpetual Duration; for though the Covenant of Circumcision, as made with God's spiritual *Israel*, be still binding, yet we see the ceremonial Part is now, by his Appointment, abolished, and the Flames which consumed the Cities of the Plain, are long since extinguished; besides, the Scriptures themselves declare, when such Phrases are used in a figurative Sense, and when not*. *The Wicked shall go away into everlasting Punishment, but the Righteous into Life eternal*. There, the same Word αἰώνιος is made use of, both to express the Duration of the Punishment of the Wicked, and the Life of the Righteous; and why Men, otherwise witty and ingenious, should be blind and senseless enough to believe the latter Part of the Verse, when applied to the one, and yet cavil at the former, with regard to the other, no Shadow of Reason can be given. To the same Purpose, the Prophet †, *and many that sleep in the Dust of the Earth shall awake, some to everlasting Life, and some to Shame and Contempt*.

To this you see Scripture agrees, and indeed natural Reason alledges nothing to the contrary; for (not to mention that the Rewards of the next Life do as far exceed the Merits of our best Performances, as any Sinner can pretend, that the Punishments of it do the Demerits of his Sins) infinite Justice once offended, requires infinite Satisfaction, which no created Being is able to yeild. But God's Justice is infinite, and irreparably offended by obstinate Sinners, that live and die in a State of Impenitence and Unbelief, and

† Gen. xvii. 3. Ep. Jud. v. 7. * Matt. xxv. 46.

† Dan. xii. 2.

and these, because they cannot satisfy at once, must be doing it in Time that shall never end.

Indeed to punish momentary Sin with endless Pain, looks shocking to the Mind of Man ; but the Evil of Sin is not measured by the Time in which it is committed. One may perpetrate a Crime in a short Space, which the Sufferings of his whole Life after can never repair.

Again, to injure an Equal is punishable, but to assault a Prince is Death, Imprisonment, or perpetual Exile : Now if, in the Eye of human Law, an Offence is so highly aggravated by the Dignity of the Party offended, must it not be infinitely more so, when committed against a Being of infinite Perfection and Excellency ?

A second Argument for the Perpetuity of future Punishment is, That if they who die in their Sins could live *for ever*, 'tis to be feared they would sin *for ever*, and therefore are justly damned *for ever*. In this World you see intended Crimes are often punished, though not fully accomplished. A treasonable Conspiracy against the *King*, if detected, is Death by the Law of the Land : How justly then may the KING OF KINGS rise to the Vindication of his Honour, and punish the Wicked according to their Intentions ? If they retain the Malignity of their Hearts against him, while they suffer his righteous Vengeance, how equal is it his Justice should be as inflexible as their Enmity ? and that they who are incorrigibly wicked should also be irrecoverably miserable ?

Moreover, the Certainty of this great Truth may yet be further illustrated from the Case of the *Fallen Angels* : About six thousand Years are now elapsed since they began to suffer, and their Misery is as far from any End as at the Beginning. If these once digni-

fied

fiend Spirits are justly for ever banished the Court of Heaven, shall we reckon it unjust in God, so to deal by degenerate Man, whose Sin was the same in Effect with theirs? If there is no Recovery for them, much less for such wretched Dunghills as we? If any were to be exeemed, why not the *Race of Heaven*? if any rejected, why not *despicable Man*?

My last and best Argument, to prove that the Torments of the *Damned* are eternal, I draw from the Nature of the Christian Covenant. You know that when *Adam*, and in him all Mankind, had broke the Law of their first Creation, lay trembling over the dreadful Gulf, and had nothing in View but a dismal Eternity; then the *Only-begotten of the Father* interposes for a lost World, and, to avert the Stroke of *Justice* from guilty Sinners, submitted thereto himself: So that there is now *only one Mediator between God and Man, the Man Christ Jesus*. You believe also, that this Life is the only Time allotted for working out our Salvation, and that in the next God will neither (as we know of) enter into a new Covenant with us, nor renew the old. Now if this be granted, and who dares deny it, it follows, that if a Man dies under the Wrath of God, he must so continue; for as there is no Possibility of Deliverance but through *Christ*, and since, at the Hour of Death, the Time of his Mediation ceases, Sin becomes eternal *à parte post*, and therefore, *salva justitia*, cannot be pardoned. So that the same Reasons, that may be given why God should punish a Sinner for a Year or an Age, serve also to prove that his Punishment will be continued throughout the countless Ages of Eternity.

And now I come to a Second doctrinal Point, namely, To inquire into the Place and Nature of the future Punishment of the *Damned*; and particularly, whether

whether it shall arise from material Fire in a local Hell, or otherways.

And here we must be content with a general Description of these Things, a particular one being only to be had of those miserable Creatures that *now* feel them. The Torments of *Hell*, as well as the Joys of *Heaven*, are in a great Measure unrevealed, and was it possible now to move the *Curtain*, and take a full View of both, the Discovery should be but very uncomfortable; for either the lightsome Hopes of enjoying the one would engross all our Thoughts, and render us unfit for the Business of Life; or the gloomy Prospect of being tormented in the other would sour all our Enjoyments, hinder the most refined Comforts of Life from refreshing us, and strike Terror into our very Hearts and Looks. *Secret things belong unto God*, and, like the Ark of old, are forbid to be seen. While in the Body we see but *darkly*, as *through a Glass*; but when the Veil of Mortality is rent, now disguised Things shall appear in their naked Dress. Till then let us rest satisfied, that Rewards and Punishments abide all Men, and that upon the small Wires of Time hang the great Weights of Eternity.

As to the Place and Residence of the Damned, Scripture is almost silent, and Philosophers say but a little about it: But that there is such a Thing, and that it is also confined to a certain Space, methinks the former plainly declares; because Bodies, as well as Souls, are to be tormented in it. * *For if God spared not the Angels that sinned, but cast them down to Hell, &c.* Now if *Heaven*, from whence they were thrust out, be a Place, then *Hell*, into which they were cast, to be reserved in Chains till the general Judgment, must be a Place also: And without this is admitted, you may as well crowd all the Devils, and damned

damned Men too, into a *Baker's Oven*, as imagine that God prepared an *Hell* for the Seat of their Punishment.

Among the fanciful *Greeks* and *Romans*, some fixed it in a large dark *Vault*, in the lowest Parts of the Earth, that are farthest from Heaven; some in sulphurous Lakes; and others in *Ætna*, *Vesuvius*, or one of the burning Mountains in *Italy*.

But as to the Earth, methinks there is no Possibility of its being situate there, both because it should have long since been extinguished for want of Air and Fuel, and must be burnt up in the general *Conflagration*.

And as for the *Vulcanoes*, or burning Mountains, though wonderful enough by Report, yet, if Room would permit, I could prove to a Demonstration, that they are only particular Fires of Nature's kindling, and not the Result of a general *Topbet*.

And as there is no Probability of its being situate in the Earth, much less can it be fixed in the Water, or Air; because the one is diametrically opposite to the Nature of Fire, and in the other there is no *Pabulum*, or Fuel, without which it could not subsist.

But rather than it should either be thought to be nowhere, or placed where Reason tells us it cannot be; and especially since the whole Tenor of both Scripture and Philosophy unanimously declare for a real local *Hell* of Fire; pray where shall we find it but in the *SUN*, which is a huge flaming Body, and has remained immovable in yon *celestial Sphere* from the Foundation of the World?

For my Part, when I contemplate this burning Object, I am filled with Wonder and Amazement, to think what *Pyrenean* Mountains of *Sulphur*, what *Atlantick* Oceans of scalding *Bitumen* are requisite to maintain such mighty, such rapid Flames. The great-
est

est *Aetnas* on Earth are but mere Kitchen Fires compared to this; in short, if that be not the *Prison of the Damned*, there is no other Place in the visible Creation looks like it. I beseech you do not start at the Proposition; be not offended at the Novelty of the Thought, (some great and learned Men entertain it) the Strangeness of an Opinion is no sufficient Reason why it should be rejected; because other now certain Truths have been formerly esteemed as ridiculous as this.

How did the incredulous World gaze at *Columbus*, when he promised to discover *America*? and with what Difficulty, for a long Time, could he persuade any of the Christian *Princes*, either to assent to his Opinion, or to be at the Charge of an Experiment? And how was the Story of *Antipodes* lately ridiculed as a Fable, and the Circulation of the Blood as a Chimera? In a word, it is Ignorance makes self-evident Truths seem incredible to those who know not the Causes of Things: For Example, you may as easily convince some Country Peasant, that the Moon is made of green Cheese, as that it is bigger than his Cart-wheel, since both seem equally to contradict his Sight, and he hath not got Reason enough to lead him farther than his Senses.

But to return, that the *Sun's body* is the Place of Punishment for Devils and damned Men deceased, still further appears from the Discovery made by *Kercher* and *Secbeiner* thro' the large Telescope at *Rome*, Anno 1635, as also of late by *Isaac Newton*: According to them there are not only great boiling Fountains of Fire and Light spread thick over it, but in many Places dark Spots representing Dens or Caverns, which are probably the proper Seats of the Blackness of Darknes; and there, perhaps, the Wicked will see no Light, but feel the Heat, and

have their Eyes tormented with the suffocating Smoke of that *fuming Gulph*: There, the *Sons of Belial*, being tortured themselves, have no other Relief (I suppose) but to wreck their Malice in being the furious *Lititors* of damned Sinners, tumbling them headlong into those *fiery Dungeons*, where they shall be tormented Day and Night, and suffer the Pangs of the *second Death* for ever, even in the largest Latitude of the Phrase: So that both *utter Darkness* and *consuming Fire* may be found here, just as the Pillar of Cloud appeared dark to the *Agyptians*, but light to the *Israelites*.

To this Conjecture the holy Scripture seems to agree*; there it is promised as a *Blessing to the Righteous*, that the Heat of the Sun shall not smite them. And the Smoke of their Torment ascendeth up for ever and ever. †

It is true, the *fixed Stars* are reckoned to be of the same Nature with the Sun, placed in the Centres of their own *Vortices*, and encircled with the like Number of Earths, or planetary Worlds, and therefore (say some) why may not any or all of these be the *Hell* as well as he? I answer, that as to what is transacted in another *Vortex* is not for us to enquire; only it is certain the *Sun* is in the Centre of ours, farthest distant from the *Empyreum*, or Imperial Seat of God's Throne, and, consequently, the Place of the Damned, with regard to this *Earth*.

And as for a Plurality of *Hells*, unless you can prove that the Stars are actually inhabited, and that their Inhabitants are either infected with *Adam's Sin*, or some other way degenerate from their primitive Integrity, I see no Manner of Occasion for more than one.

Again

* *Psal* cxxi. 6. *Isa.* xlix. 10.

† *Rev.* xiv. 11.

Again, it may be objected, that the *Sun* is Part of this visible World, and (if the Place of Punishment) must perish in the last universal *Fire*.

To this we reply, that with respect to our *Earth* it shall ; because there will be no farther need of his Light and Heat, to comfort those Creatures which God hath made, and which shall then be no more ; and in this Sense, both *Sun* and *Moon* shall darken and dissolve in Blood * ; the lower Heavens of Clouds and Air shall pass away with a mighty Noise, and be folded together as a Scroll of Parchment touched with the Fire ; the Embattlements of the *holy City* shall be in a lighted Flame, and the whole Artillery of the Skies darted down, the outward Elements of Fire, Water, Earth and Air, shall melt with fervent Heat ; but the starry Frame will be quite unconcerned in the grand Catastrophe, and shall suffer no more then, than it did by the Waters of the Deluge †.

Heavenly Bodies may indeed have Changes and Revolutions peculiar to themselves, and unknown to us, but our Flames cannot reach them ; and as the Habitation of Devils must be exempted from Destruction, as well as the Mansion of the Blessed ; and, especially, seeing there is no other Part in the Creation of God, comes up to the Characters given it in History, both sacred and Prophane, why the *Sun* may not be the *Hell*, rather than any other Place, methinks none without an express Revelation to the contrary can deny.

But in the next Place ; as the *Topbet* is probably fixed in the *Sun*, here you may ask me wherein the Punishment of it consists, and whether its Fire be real or metaphorical ?

In Answer to this, I know some are pleased to new-frame the Judgments of God after their own Fancies, and spiritualize away the substantial Part of *Hell-Flames*, by resolving them into that inward Fire of the Mind occasioned by over late Repentance for Sin, and Exclusion from the divine Presence; but since this is sufficiently expressed by the *Worm that dieth not*, to what End is the Addition of *Fire unquenchable; Hell-fire, Lake of Fire, and Everlasting Burnings* in holy Writ, if not to denote something different from the other? How forced and unnatural a Tautology doth it infer?

But that the Fire of *Hell* is real corporeal Fire, still further appears from our *Lord's* Exposition of that Parable of the good Seed *. When Parables by reason of their Darkness are expounded, the Exposition, you know, must be in plain Speech, otherwise it should breed greater Confusion in the Minds of the Hearers than the Parables themselves: The Fire therefore, into which the *wicked* shall be cast, is no paraborical Allusion, because in this Chapter, by it the Obscurity of the Parable is unfolded, and you may as well suppose the *Angels, the End of the World,* and every other Part of the Exposition is allegorical, as that. To the same Purpose †, *Depart from me ye cursed into everlasting Fire, &c.* Now, tho' one great Use of Gospel Metaphors, was, *that Unbelievers seeing might see, and not perceive, and hearing might hear and not understand*, yet at the general Judgment, the Cause being removed, the Effect will cease; and the Sentence of the Judge must not be wrapt up in Figures, but delivered in plain Terms, that the guilty may know their Doom, and the Elect (who must concur with *Christ* in judging) their Duty. Add to those

* *Matt. xlii and seq.*

† *Matt. xxv. 41.*

those two other self evident Texts * ; *And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life, was cast into the Lake of Fire. But the fearful and unbelieving shall have their Part in the Lake that burneth with Fire and Brimstone, &c.*

Now, tho' it is usual in Scripture, sometimes to represent the Joys of *Heaven*, under the Notion of Kingdoms, Crowns, Feasts, Marriages, and every thing that is pleasant to the Senses, and also the Torments of *Hell* by the opposite extremes, yet all of these Passages are so express and emphatical, that he who runs may read the literal Interpretation.

Indeed the Nature of *Hell-Flames* is uncertain ; perhaps the Pile thereof is liquid Fire and much Wood, so the Text : Or it may be, it is mixed with *Brimstone*, that it may burn not only darker and sharper, but also loathsomer to grieve the Sight, Smell and Taste of the wicked, who have suffocated themselves here with so many brutal Pleasures : But of what Quality so ever it is, it seems to be altogether a material Creature. And if you enquire how spiritual Beings can be affected by corporeal, I answer, You have a Proof of that in your selves, in whom the Soul suffers many Things from the Body ; for if Spirit and mere Matter can be so closely joined here, as to act upon one another, what hinders it to be so hereafter ?

But here it may be objected, that no material Thing is capable of *Eternity*, and, consequently, that *Hell Fire* is only metaphorical. This, I must confess, is the most plausible Objection can be advanced ; but though we cannot conceive how Matter may be of *eternal Duration*, yet why should we thence conclude, that it is impossible so to be ? *The Wind blows*

News, &c. and because we can neither see it, nor know whence it comes, shall we deny that there is any such thing? Shall we confine the infinite Power of God to the scanty Laws of Nature, or to the more scanty Compass of our Understandings? Cannot the great *Author of Nature* continue that by the Breath of his Mouth, which by his Word he hath created?

If you plead that no corporeal *Being* can subsist in Fire, without being consumed, I affirm it may; for not to mention the Story of the *Salamander*, and other Animals that are said to live in the Fire only, the Body of one that is struck with a certain Kind of Lightning, common in *America*, (I saw the Experiment on a Negro in *Maryland*) cannot be reduced to Ashes by common Fire. Again, the Mountains burn, yet endure, and why not also the Damned, and Enemies of God? The human Body, when reunited to the Soul at the Resurrection, will endure for ever after, and why not the Flames in which it is tormented? Let this Doubt, therefore, depart from the Minds of the Faithful.

But, *lastly*, on this Head, there is a double Punishment of the Damned in *Hell*; according to that known Definition of the Schools, there is a *pena damni*, and a *pena sensus*, a Punishment of Loss, and a Punishment of Sense, *viz.* internal Sorrow to torment the Mind, when excluded from heavenly Bliss, and external Fire to torture the Body; and both these put together, with the dreadful Circumstances that attend them, make up that *formal Hell*, that *Fulness of Cursedness*, which is reserved for the Damned for evermore. Moreover, one great Ingredient of this *spiritual Burning*, will arise from the bitter Remorse of

an accusing, self-condemning *Conscience* *; this is the Worm will gnaw on the Wicked's inward Parts continually, this the subtle Flame will prey on their Vitals for ever. Men may drown the Clamours of *Conscience* here, with Pleasure, Business, or the Noise and Hurry of human Affairs; but no such Relief in Eternity, no Work nor Device beyond the Grave. When the condemned Sinner casts his Eyes on this World, and considers his late Condition there, faint would he blot out of Mind the Remembrance of all his bad Deeds; but *Conscience* will not be stifled so; like an impetuous Stream they will come faster and faster, and then cry out against him, we have followed you in Life and Death, and now we will follow you to *Eternity*. If he looks back on his earthly Enjoyments, how will it gall him to think, that they are gone for ever, and left a tormenting Sting behind! If he reflects that the Offers of Mercy are now recalled, and will never be tendered any more, how must he be lost, and swallowed up in Horror, Rage, and Desperation! To consider that he carries his *Tormentor* in his own Breast, and that it is as impossible to get rid of it, as to grasp the Universe in the Hollow of one's Hand, will be *Hell* within *Hell*, and enough to turn a *condemned Sinner* into an *accursed Fiend*.

Another Part of *infernal Punishment* will proceed from a sad Separation from the Presence of the Lord, and the Glory of his Power †; though, at present, the Wicked are insensible of this unspeakable Loss, yet at Death the Eye of the Soul shall be opened, and then shall they see clearly what it is to be deprived of the *beatifick Vision*, and fall short of *heavenly Bliss*.

A third Addition to this Pain, will flow from a frightful Sense of the Displeasure of an inexorable God *, *Who knows the Power of his Anger? As is his Wrath, so is his Fear.* In what Manner he will exercise his Wrath is uncertain; but sure they who are exposed to it, must be miserable beyond Expression; our Fears, under the Alarms of Conscience, are boundless; but Wrath, armed with infinite Power, exceeds all. How unspeakably miserable must these *Vessels of Wrath fitted for Destruction* be, on whom so terrible a Majesty resolves to make his Power known! Ah! how deep will the Sword of Justice pierce the Sinner's Heart, when wielded by an irresistible Arm!

A fourth Article of the *future Punishment of the Wicked*, will perhaps flow from the continual Rage of unsatisfied Desires. It is the Opinion of *Plato*, and his Followers, that whatsoever vicious Habits we indulge, during our Residence in the Body, will cleave to us in a separate State, where we shall burn with a perpetual Thirst after those Things we despair ever to possess; in Confirmation of which, they observe, that a voluptuous Youth degenerates, by Degrees, into a lustful old Man. And indeed, if sinful Motions survive in the Body, at a Time when it has least Instigation from the Soul, we have Reason to believe, that they will cleave to her in another World, where the Gangrene will be too far gone to be cured; and if so, how wretchedly miserable must that Creature be, who carries irregular Passions along with him to Eternity, where there is no Possibility of gratifying them, no Organs, nor Objects, fit for the Purpose? To think the Pleasures of Sense are all withdrawn, and that he must flame perpetually in unquenchable Desires, would be *Hell* enough for the impurest Sinner on Earth, if there was none other.

The

The last and worst Ingredient of the *Torments of the Damned* is, that they are everlasting. Had they any Prospect of Deliverance, at the remotest Distance of Time, it would be some Comfort; but, alas! that is impossible, for in Eternity there is neither past, present, nor to come.

*There's nothing there that's new, and nothing past,
But an eternal now doth always last.*

And therefore, when 100000000 *Myriads* of Years are over and gone, their Misery is but beginning. Oh! Grief to consider, to be thus adjudged to perpetual Woe; and have Life continued only to be miserable, and made standing Monuments of Justice to eternal Ages. If one Hour's Pain seems grievous; how direful the Prospect of endless Torment? Oh! cutting Thought, to be ever dying, and yet incapable of Death. Ah! killing Reflection, to feel the whole Pressure of a present Calamity, without being relieved, either by the Memory of any thing that is past, or the Hopes of any thing that is to come.

Oh Eternity!

Eternity! thou pleasing, dreadful Thought!

Oh that our Hearts were more duly affected with these great Truths, in which we are all so nearly concerned.

But it is Time to proceed to the last Thing proposed, and that is, To conclude what hath been said, with a Word of Exhortation and Advice to Sinners of all Ranks, and shew them how to escape this Torment, this Tophet ordained of old.

And O! that the Lord would now enable me to *lift up my Voice as a Trumpet*; for was it possible to speak so loud, as the whole World could hear me, I could not sound a more useful Alarm in their Ears.

A P P L I C A T I O N.

And here I shall address myself to two different

denies the very Being of God, and derides a future State, Good and Bad, Heaven and Hell.

2dly. To the practical one, who, though he professes to believe all, yet in Practice denies them, being abominable, disobedient, and to every good Work reprobate.

And *first*, as for you, Gentlemen of loose and atheistical Principles, I have a Message from God to you, 'tis my Duty to *warn you to fly from the Wrath to come*; but where, oh! where shall I find a Motive to engage you to consult your own Interest? where a Remedy to cure your spiritual Stupidity and Infatuation? Ah! how my Heart bleeds to see you hanging over the *fiery Furnace*! Are you a Man of Letters that is sunk so low? Then, I will not send you to the *inspired Writers*, perhaps you will disdain to receive Instruction from them; but hear what the old blind *Heathen* says, when speaking of the Majesty of the *immortal King of Heaven*:

Η, και κινεύουσιν ἐπ' ὅρουσι νεύσθ' Κρονιον,
 Αμείβεσθαι δ' ἄρα χῆται ἐπιερύσαντο Ἀνακτος
 Κράτος ἐπ' ἀθάνατοιο μέγαν δ' ἐλέλιζεν Ὀλύμπου

HOMER.

He spake, and awful bends his sable Brows,
Shakes his ambrosial Curls, and gives the Nod;
The Stamp of Fate, and Sanction of the God.

POPE'S Translation.

Had you but the same Ideas of God as he, you would never provoke the Eyes of his Glory, so as to forget him that made you any more.

Says SENECA, *Semper vivunt incendia inferna, & inconsumptibiles Flammæ nudum corpus allambent*: "Hell
" Fire lives for ever, and it is never to be extinguish-
" ed, Flames shall embrace the naked Body. Shall
not the very Heathens then rise up in Judgment a-
gainst you? Yea, and not only the Learned Ones of

Greece and Rome, but the very Savages of *America*; for during my Stay there, I never remember to have heard a wild *Indian* deny the *Seotalei-cateei*, him that sits in *Heaven*; but on the contrary, would never mention this Name, without either laying his Hand on his Breast, or casting his Eyes towards the Ground,

Oh! poor deluded, self-deluding Sinners, I am distressed for you: I have already blasted my Youth by going to preach in a hot Country, among *severe Seasons*, and a *wicked People*; and now I am returned, Oh! that I could be of Use to you also. To know that but one Soul shall be delivered from that *fiery Furnace*, by my Means, would make me sing Praises at Midnight. If Importunity could do the Business, I should wrestle till the Morning Watch, and speak till I could do no more.

Come, let us reason together. Have you any sufficient Grounds for your resolved Infidelity? Can you prove, that any thing could either exist from Eternity, or give Being to itself? Can you demonstrate by Dint of Argument, what the *Poet* said in his Heart, viz. *that there is no God*? Can you make it appear, that *Justice* is no Perfection of his Nature? Do you expect any clearer Evidence than has been already given? Would you be carried into that *Place of Torment* to be convinced? Must the *Terrors of the Lord* be let loose upon you, as in the Case of *Spira*, who wished to be in *Hell* to know the worst? Or shall one of your old Companions in Sin leave his *flaming Prison* to inform you? If he should, pray, how could you know whether he spoke true or false, or whether he was a *Devil*, or a credible Messenger? *You have Moses and the Prophets, hear them.*

Perhaps this Sermon will e'er long be the Subject of your Wit and Drollery, but as it was good Counsel given the oppressed Subjects of *Herod*, to be sure of his Death before they publickly rejoiced at it, so I would advise you to be sure that there is no *Hell*.

before you scoff at the Punishments of it. Was you in the right, the Triumphs of your Wit would pass off with a good Air amidst the Applauses of your Admirers ; but, if after all, your Opinion happens to be wrong, and there proves to be an *Hell*, it is to be feared, you will carrels one another in it with as ill a Grace as *Malefactors* at the Place of Execution : And *Conscience*, which only shews its Teeth at present, will then bite like a Serpent, as having its full Taste and Relish.

Indeed you may fondly think yourselves wiser than the rest of Mankind, and not to be imposed upon by the crafty Tales of *Priests*, or the cunning Inventions of subtle *Politicians*, and so keep jesting with edged Tools, for a Time ; but when you put off that Veil of organized Matter, whereby you hold Commerce with the World, and the *Devil* has once decoyed you into his Net, you will find yourselves the only gull'd Persons, and your beloved Principle of Sense will fully convince you of the Truths and Torments you would not now believe : And tho' your long abused *Reason* and *Judgment* will be probably set on Work to contrive some Means of Escape, yet they will then join their Forces to as little Purpose as *the Daughters of Danaus* did theirs, to fill the Barrel with Water, whose Holes let it out at the Sides, and Bottom, as fast as they poured it in at the Head. Tell me, do you find a *Monitor* of all this within yourselves, which, notwithstanding your repeated Endeavours to stifle it, now and then gives you a secret Reproof ? And who knows but the *Sun*, in whose Sight you offend, and who is an Eye-witness of your Impieties, may be ordained to punish you for them. There is a confessed Analogy between *Conscience* and the *Sun*, and it is not impossible, but that as in this Life, one is the inward, so the other may be the outward Plague in the next ; as this is *the Worm that dieth not*, so that may be *the Fire that is not quenched*.

But be that as it will, you may be assured there is an *Hell*, if it be not there, it is somewhere else. In a Word, if there is any such godless Wretch, as I am now speaking to, here present, may the God of the Spirits of all Flesh strike him to the Heart, and say *thou art the Man*.

But, lastly, as for you, who believe a *future State*, both good and bad, and yet live as if there was neither, give me Leave to tell you, you are under greater Condemnation than the former: For *Atheists*, bad as they are, do yet act according to their Principles, but you, by living contrary to yours, manifestly betray them; they are religious, generous, open Enemies, you its secret Foes, and false Friends: And, therefore, if there be one Place in the *Dungeon of Hell* darker than another, (and so there is, as sure as there are *Macule*, or *Spots in the Sun*) it is you, you *Traitors*, that deserve it.

But I forget my Design, which is not to suppose, or bring, but prevent your coming thither; and, sure unless you have lost your Wits, you will assist me in so charitable an Undertaking.

All I crave then to this End, is that you abandon your former evil Ways, implore the Mercy of God in the Merits of *Christ Jesus*, break your Covenant with *Hell and Death*, and embark in the Service of your *Saviour*. Alas! What are you doing, while you are saying Peace, Peace, the Devil, as a *strong Man armed*, is in full Possession of your Souls. *Hell is moved from beneath to meet you*; the Pit from whence there is no Return hath opened its Mouth to swallow you up; a mighty Tempest is stirred round about thee, and thou art just sinking into the Depth of Destruction, even into the *Gulph of God's Judgments*: *What meanest thou then, O Sleeper, arise, call upon thy God, so he may think of thee, that thou perish not*. Stand up this Moment, shake your selves from the Dust, or let the Thunder of God's Threatenings do it for you.

and determine to find no Rest to your Souls, till ready to cry out with the *trembling Jailor*, *Lord, what shall I do to be saved?* Leave your old Companions of Sin and Death; *save, O save yourselves from this untoward Generation; come out from among them, and be ye separate, touch not the unclean Things.*

Behold! the *Lord God of Heaven and Earth* now calls you, by my Mouth, and bids me tell you, to *mind the Things that belong to your Peace, before they be hid from your Eyes; O Earth, Earth, Earth, hear the Word of the Lord!* Awake, you that now sleep in Sin and Security! Awake, ye Church Professors! Awake, ye carnal Hypocrites! Awake, baptized Heathens, that have a Name to live, and yet are dead! Awake, ye immortal Spirits, out of your fond Dream of Wordly Happiness. What! Did not God create you for himself? How then can you rest, till you rest in him. What! Did not you come originally from *Heaven*, and have you no Thoughts of going back to your native Country? *Return, return, thou Wanderer, fly back to the Ark.* This is not your Home, you are but Strangers upon Earth, Creatures of a Day, just launching out into an unchangeable State. Yet a little while, and Men shall be either *confirmati in bono, vel obfirmati in malo*, and he that is holy shall be holy still, and he that is unjust, shall be so still.

Alas! then why will you rest on the Brink of the Pit, why on the *Devil's Arm*, why in the Jaws of everlasting Destruction? The Measure of your Iniquity is well nigh full, and you are almost ripe for eternal Damnation: Perhaps, you are now resisting the last Effort of divine Grace to save you. There is no Promise for To-morrow, no Possibility of Salvation in the *Shades below*: The Faith of damned Men, like that of *Devils*, will cause only Confusion and trembling, and their Repentance be like *Esau's* for the Loss of his Birth-right, which he could never re-

gain, *tho' be sought it carefully with Tears* *. It is To-day if you will hear his Voice, harden not your Hearts; make haste, Eternity is at hand, even an Eternity of Happiness or Misery. Should you die in a State of Enmity with God, supposing there was no Hell, what would you do in the Regions of Immortality? You cannot eat nor drink there, you cannot indulge *the Lust of the Eye, the Lust of the Flesh, or the Pride of Life* there, you forgot to leave Pride, Lust, Intemperance, Covetousness, &c. behind you, when you put off the Body, and you have a Relish for nought else: And as you cannot change your own Natures, (nor has God promised to do it for you) was there no other Place of Punishment, you will find your own Body Hell, and your Soul a *Devil* to torment, and so be constrained to own in the Words of the Poet,

*Hell is where'er I am,
Myself am Hell.*

Here you will be ever burning, and not consumed, ever dying, and yet incapable of Death: Here you will repent that Repentance is too late, and weep to think that Weeping is to no Purpose: Here you are no longer chear'd with the Light of the Sun, nor diverted by the Flux of various Objects; but those *Dogs of Hell* are let loose to prey upon you with unabated Strength; nor is there the least Hopes of your Spirits being restored to their original Purity, not even by *Purgatory*, or that imaginary purging Fire, so elegantly described by the *Heathen*, some Ages before the Notion was revived in the *Church of Rome*.

——— *Alie tenduntur manes,
Suspensæ ad ventos, aliis sub gurgite vasto
Insutum cluitur scelus, aut exuritur igni;
Donec longa dies, exacto temporis orbi,
Concretam exemit labem, purumque reliquit.*

What a great Gulph will then be fixed between you and Happiness? Do not your Hearts shudder at the Thought? When you stand on the Verge of Life, ready to launch out into Eternity, what can you think? Earthly Enjoyments are fled as Smoke, and before you all is dark and dreary, so that upon the best Supposition, you may well address your parting Soul in the Words of dying *Adrian*.

Poor, little, pretty, fluttering thing,

Mist we no longer live together?

And dost thou prune thy tremb'ling Wing,

To take thy Flight, thou knowest not whither?

Thy pleasing Vein, thy hum'rous Folly,

Is all neglected, all forgot,

And pensive, wavering, melancholy,

Thou hast, and fear'st, thou know'st not what.

And now, who can consider all this, and not to tremble? Who can profess to believe there is such a Place as we have been treating of, and yet walk on in the ready Way that leads to it? For every known Sin is a plain Step towards it, and, if persisted in, will as certainly lead you thither, as keeping on in the right Way from one Place to another, will bring a Traveller to the Town he designs to be at. Remember this, therefore, ye Transgressors; and shew yourselves Men.

But if ye are still inexorable, howl and weep, for the Miseries will come upon you: If the supreme Being be Almighty, he hath direful Thunderbolts to punish the Wickedness of bold and atheistical Men. Remember, God will not always lie neuter, the Almighty will not always lie neuter; the Almighty will not ever be as one that is indifferent to his Creatures; if you will not feel him in his Love, you must feel him in his Wrath; and be glad to shrink within the Flames, to conceal yourselves from him. Were your Bodies Break in Pieces, your Souls would be

of old, is sufficient to heat them through. But a few Months, and you are laid under an irreversibile Doom; yet, a little while, *and the pale Horse, whose Rider's Name is Death, shall fetch you away, and as the Tree falls it must lie.* A few more Sands being run, and your Glass is out, and when the Gourd, that overshadowed you in natural Life, is *cut down and withered*, then perhaps both the *Sun of Nature*, and that of divine Wrath, *shall beat upon your Heads, and you shall faint, and with in yourselves to die.*

In a Word, it is not in the Power of Imagination to conceive the fearful Effects of Omnipotence incensed. If Men are so ingenious in tormenting, how much more *Devils* and damned *Furies*? If a poor momentary Flame be so painful, how infinitely more so the *Ταβρα το πυρος* that Hell of Fire? If the Heat of the Sun be so violent at this Distance, that Criminals in hotter Climates are laid a roasting in its piercing Rays, what would it be, think you, was you cast into its Body, and made capable of ever subsisting there?

What a goodly Number of precious Souls are now before me, who e'er long must be ushered into Eternity; and some perhaps howling in *Hell* next Morning! I see your Bodies are well adorned, but unless your Souls are covered with the spotless Raiment of Christ's Righteousness, a few Years being over, and you'll be cloathed in purple Flames, and have burning instead of Beauty. You may be esteemed among Men, but without this, you are but painted Sepulchres in the Sight of God, while Enemies to him, your Food but nourishes you for the Day of Slaughter, and the Sun-beams light you on to eternal Damnation. Perhaps you are moral honest Persons, and believe *there is but one God, and a Life to come*; but, O Man, O Woman, unless that Belief influence your Practice, it signifies no more to the Salvation

of your Souls, than to know that a Crow lost a Feather upon yonder *Pyrenean Mountain*.

If I speak to any, more than another, it is to you who think your selves least concerned in this Exhortation, my earnest Prayer is, that you may be saved. I could not die in Peace, till I preached on this Subject, that, if possible, I may *pull you as Brands from the Burning*; (for I look upon every Sinner that goes to *Hell*, as a Jewel taken from my Crown in the Day of the *Lord*, every damned Soul a Degree of Blessedness lost in the Vision of God.) Who would *dwell with devouring Fire, &c?* Can you think of living at an inaccessible Distance from Christ! To be near him would, perhaps, be some Comfort, if it was under his Frowns; but no such Favour is granted in *Hell*.

Methinks I hear some of the Souls of the Damned venting their fruitless Sorrow in the following Manner. *O wretched Man! who shall deliver me from this Body of Death?* what a foolish Mortal have I been, thus to involve myself in never ceasing Torment, for the seeming Pleasures of a vain World? And are these the Wages of Sin? Have the grand Deceiver's Promises come at last to this? Oh! *damned Apostate!* thus to delude me with pretended Kindness! Oh! that I had never hearkened to his beguiling Insinuations! How often have I been cautioned against coming to this Place, by God's Ministers, and yet always made light of it! Oh! but for one Day I have spent in Sin, to make up my Peace with God in *Christ Jesus*. Vah me! must this *quondam* delicate Body keep thus frying for ever in *solar Flames*, and be eternally confined among *insulting Devils, and malignant Furies*? Oh Eternity! I cannot, I will not, and yet must be miserable for ever. *Proh dolor! Woe! woe! and alas for evermore!*

But these Things are both too melancholy for me to preach, and for you to hear; and methinks I hear

some secure Sinner saying to himself, This Minister has harsh Expressions, who can bear them; *Is he come to torment us before the Time?* But what shall we do, shall we suffer you to sleep on, and take your Rest, and involve ourselves in your Damnation? What! shall we *dawb with untempered Mortar, sew Pillows to all Arm-holes*, and prophecy smoother Things than God allows? Hath not every Man Guilt enough of his own to answer for, though he be not accessory to the Ruin of others? Was *Hell* only a painted Fire, I should have chose a more agreeable Theme, but dare not dissemble, when speaking for God: Punishment is his Work, and to denounce his Threatenings (to prevent it) is mine.

Well, Brethren, what say you to it? Are your Ears tickled, or Hearts convinced? Are you resolved, where you *have done Iniquity* hitherto, to *do so no more*? Are you weary of your Burden, or do you hug your Chains, and reckon me a *Troubler of Israel*? I see you are all thronging round, and seem to be very attentive; but whose Heart has the *Lord* enlarged this Day, to hearken to the Voice of his Servant? If the Arguments I have used do not prevail, I am persuaded there are none that will. Shall I leave you lamenting, that none would believe my Report, or go along rejoicing, that many who had gone astray are now returned to the *Lord*? I can speak no more, may the *Lord* do it for me, by speaking to your Hearts. O that this may be an accepted Time! May the Arrows of Conviction fly thick in this Assembly, that our Meeting may be for the better, and not for the worse! and O! that some *Christless* Souls may be awakened, and enabled to escape that *Place of Torment*.

And to this End, let me exhort you, once for all, to live as Candidates for Eternity, as persuaded that you must shortly be either with *Lazarus* in *Abraham's Bosom*, or with *Dives* in that tormenting Flame.

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it be your constant Care to keep a Conscience void of Offence towards God and Man in every Thing. And whether you agree with me in regard to the Sun's being the Hell, or not, yet (in case it be) let the Daily Prospect of the one set you a-doing to avoid the Punishment of the other. O! do not stifle Conviction, stop not your Ears against such friendly Admonitions! Say not, *non persuadebis, etiamsi tu persuaderis*, do not despise the Message on account of the Meanness of the Messenger. O hearken to Reason, as you are Men, and command Conscience to do its Office, as you are Christians! Do but seriously consider what you have heard, comply with the Exhortation given, and, my Soul for yours, you shall escape that *Tophet*; for if so be, the God whom you serve, will surely deliver you from the burning fiery Furnace†.

And when all human Comfort fails, your Eye and Heart-strings a-breaking, and you are just ready to shoot the Gulph, and fly away into the World of Spirits, you will have God for your Comforter, Defender, and Lifter-up of your Head; and shall, on the Wings of Victory, and in the Arms of Cherubs, spring aloft to yonder celestial Mansions, where God the Father, Son, and Spirit, reside, in a most visible and transcendent Glory; and upon your Entrance shall be welcomed by an enthroned Redeemer, seated on a shining Throne, arrayed with your Robe, Crown, and Palm, and emparadised in the Bosom of the Deity.

Unto which happy State, may the LORD bring all of us, in his good Way and Time; and mean while, bless what hath been said, in as far as delivered agreeable to his Mind and Will, and to his most excellent Name be Glory, Honour, Dominion and Praise, in the Church throughout all Ages, World without End.

Amen and Amen.

*Si quid novisti rectius istis, candidus imperti,
Si non, his utere mecum.*

HORAT.